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**NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY PRESENTS CONTEMPORARY LOOK AT  
PRE-EMINENT IBEROAMERICAN FOLK ART COLLECTION IN U.S. DEBUT**

***GRANDES MAESTROS: GREAT MASTERS OF IBEROAMERICAN FOLK ART, COLLECTION OF FOMENTO  
CULTURAL BANAMEX***

**November 9, 2014 through September 13, 2015**

***Day-Long Latin Festival, November 9, Featuring Latin American Inspired Cuisine; Artisan Workshops;  
Live Musical & Dance Performances***

LOS ANGELES—On **November 9**, the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (NHM) will present a contemporary look at folk art when it debuts for U.S. audiences the extraordinary traveling exhibition ***Grandes Maestros: Great Masters of Iberoamerican Folk Art, Collection of Fomento Cultural Banamex***. To celebrate the Los Angeles opening, an exhibition-inspired Latin Festival featuring dance, musical and cultural performances such as INCA presented by the Music Center; L.A. Opera’s *Florencia en el Amazonas*; and Malibu Mariachi as well as guided tours, artisanal workshops and Latin-American inspired cuisine will occur inside and outside of the Museum throughout the day.



More than 800 works made by approximately 600 of the most accomplished artists from 22 countries including Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, México, Nicaragua, Panamá, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Uruguay, Venezuela as well as Spain and Portugal will be **on view through September 13, 2015** in the Museum’s special exhibitions galleries which span 13,000 square feet.

The Los Angeles presentation of *Grandes Maestros* is curated by Cándida Fernández de Calderón, Director of Fomento Cultural Banamex. It was designed in collaboration NHM’s award-winning exhibitions team.

“Folk art is a marriage of human creativity, cultural identity, and a powerful bond to the planet and the natural resources it provides. So it should be no

surprise that NHM will be the first U.S. stop for the *Grandes Maestros* exhibition. We explore how nature and culture, past and present, intersect,” said Dr. Jane Pisano, NHM President and Director. “Los Angeles has strong ties to Latin America, from which the *Grandes Maestros* treasures come. The exhibit—at this Museum and in this city—will move people to see their pasts, and the world around them, in new ways.”

The experience begins with an introductory gallery to the *Grandes Maestros*, or Great Masters, themselves. A multi-media map comes to life with images of a featured object from each of the 22 countries. On opposite walls, a large-scale video installation features moving portraits of the artists and videos of them at work.

This introductory gallery leads into galleries filled with contemporary works grouped by artistic mediums—textiles, wood, clay, metal, natural fibers, and various (paper, leather). Walls feature huge swaths of color, and each of the intricately-crafted, boldly colored objects is filled with character and unique personality. They are arranged on modernist pedestals to highlight the fact that these are contemporary folk masterpieces made with expansive cultural, ethnic, geographical, and artistic diversity—and the absence of glass cases allows visitors an intimate look at their craftsmanship.

Leading masters of folk art such as Óscar Soteno Elías (Mexico), Edilsa Hitucama Negria (Panama), and Antonio Lopez Fuentes, Casa Fermin (Spain) were selected to showcase the highest levels of achievement in traditional arts with objects created to illustrate their customs, festivals and devotions, myths, and everyday life. These contemporary artworks stem from long and rich traditions reaching back to the pre-Columbian era and also illustrate European influences.

Intricate textiles, hand-carved miniature sculptures, yarn paintings, clay animals, religious and political retables—associated with daily use or ritual purpose and immersed in the traditions and identity of Iberoamerican communities across Mexico, Central and South America, Spain and Portugal—are featured. All of the works are by living artists, many of whom are working in local collectives, and some of whom are well known throughout their countries and beyond.

“The *Grandes Maestros of Iberoamerica* program has propelled Fomento Cultural Banamex AC’s support of these masters without upsetting the work’s technical and aesthetic design, and without violating the basics of the masters’ *ars magna*. We are reaffirming the importance of the work’s cultural values and providing more and better tools for the inexhaustible creation of works in the future,” Fernández said.

NHM will kick-off opening celebrations for *Grandes Maestros* on November 9 with the Latin Festival. Museum visitors will be invited to take part in day-long festivities, featuring hands-on activities and cultural programs. The Latin Festival will feature performances by INCA (presented by the Music Center); L.A. Opera; Malibu Mariachi; and Viver Brasil.

The Museum will host a series of public programs complementing *Grandes Maestros* throughout the run of the exhibition, including food and artisan workshops on tamale and tortilla-making, cacao and masks as well as cultural celebrations of the many countries represented in the exhibition. Related public and educational programs can be found on [www.nhm.org/site/explore-exhibits/special-exhibits/grandes-maestros/events](http://www.nhm.org/site/explore-exhibits/special-exhibits/grandes-maestros/events).

At the end of the *Grandes Maestros* exhibition on Level 1, visitors will find a museum store dedicated to the unique artisan-produced objects of the Grand Masters as well as merchandise inspired by their works.

Organized by Fomento Cultural Banamex, the exhibition has traveled to the following contemporary art and cultural venues in Latin America and Spain prior to its U.S. debut at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County: *Palacio de Iturbide – Centro Cultural Banamex*, Mexico City, Mexico; *Espacio de Creación Contemporánea (ECCO)*, Cádiz, Spain; *Teatro Fernán Gómez*, Madrid, Spain; *Museo de Arte Moderno de Bogotá (MAMBO)*, Bogotá, Colombia; *Centro Cultural FIESP – Ruth Cardoso*, Sao Paulo, Brazil; *Folk Art Museum, José Hernández* and *Latin American Art Museum, Isaac Fernández*, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

*Grandes Maestros* has arrived in Los Angeles with the support of Banco Nacional de México, Citi, Roberto Hernández Ramírez Foundation, Secretariat of Foreign Affairs (Mexico), Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes (Mexico) and Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (Mexico). They have provided support for the program and made the collection possible since 2007.

The Los Angeles exhibition of *Grandes Maestros* is presented by ScholarShare.

**IMAGE CAPTION:** 1. Leonardo Linares Vargas. *Skull*, 2001. Wire and papier-mâché, modeled and polychromed. Mexico City, Federal District, Mexico. Image Courtesy of Fomento Cultural Banamex, A.C.

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### **Visitor Information**

Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County  
900 Exposition Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90007  
<http://www.nhm.org>  
<http://www.fomentoculturalbanamex.org>  
#grandesmaestros

### **Hours**

9:30 am – 5:00 pm daily

### **Special Ticketing**

[www.nhm.org/site/plan-your-visit/tickets](http://www.nhm.org/site/plan-your-visit/tickets)

Exhibition tickets are free for NHM members.

Prices include general museum admission plus *Grandes Maestros* (\$8 for adults).

Members	FREE
Children 2 and under	FREE
Children 3 – 12	\$10.00
Youth 13 – 17	\$11.00
College Students w/ ID	\$17.00
Seniors (62+)	\$17.00
Adults	\$20.00

### **About the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County**

The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County is located at 900 Exposition Blvd., Los Angeles. It is open daily 9:30 am to 5 pm. The Museum was the first dedicated museum building in Los Angeles, opening its doors in 1913. It has amassed one of the world's most extensive and valuable collections of natural and cultural history—with more than 35 million objects, some as old as 4.5 billion years. The Natural History Family of Museums includes the NHM, the Page Museum at the La Brea Tar Pits (Hancock Park/Mid-Wilshire), and the William S. Hart Park and Museum (Newhall, California). The Family of Museums serves more than one million families and visitors annually, and is a national leader in research, exhibitions and education.

### **About Fomento Cultural Banamex, A.C.**

Fomento Cultural Banamex, A.C., is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to encourage investment in cultural development, and to promote and preserve the Mexican culture. Since its inception in 1971, has had the vision to be recognized example of private enterprise that promotes the culture of Mexico, with leadership through innovative actions in their lines of action: exhibitions of art and history, publications, support folk art restoration and conservation of heritage and educational activities.